

Confirmation service

Reaffirmation of Baptism and admission to Church Membership

For those baptised at some time in the past who come to make their own confession of Christian faith and enter into the full privileges and responsibilities of membership of Christ's Church.

This service is offered as an example. Ministers and worship leaders are free and encouraged to choose appropriate Bible passages, and to write or prepare their own prayers and material to use alongside or instead of the examples here. **There are, however, some parts of the text that must be used and these are indicated by the orange boxes.**

The service follows after the reading of Scripture and the proclamation of the Word.

Two forms of affirmation for baptismal promises are included in number 3, and two others may be found in the Basis of Union, Schedule A. These are the only forms authorised for use by the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church.

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Introduction

By the sacrament of baptism we are all made one in the Body of Christ. We receive the gift of the Holy Spirit to enable us to live as the people of God and to serve God's purpose. In baptism God says 'Yes' to us. Today, in response to the call of Christ and the leading of the Holy Spirit, ... N ... comes to affirm *their* baptism, to say 'Yes' to God, to make *their* own profession of faith in Jesus Christ, and to be received into the full privileges and responsibilities of membership of Christ's Church. By confirmation *they* are promised the strengthening of the Holy Spirit so that *they* may be a faithful follower/s of Christ and member of the Church.

I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name.

John 15:5, 7-9, 16-17

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling-place for God.

Ephesians 2:19-22

Proclamation of faith

[A large candle, such as an Easter \(Paschal\) candle, may be lit.](#)

[The Apostles' or Nicene Creed or a Statement of Faith of the United Reformed Church may be used \(see the statement of faith approved by General Assembly in 1997 \[here in a responsive form\], or a hymn of faith may be sung.](#)

Let us proclaim the faith of the Church through the ages:

We believe in the one and only God, Eternal Trinity,
from whom, through whom and for whom all created things exist.

All **God alone we worship;
in God we put our trust.**

We worship God,
source and sustainer of creation,

All **whom Jesus called Father,
whose sons and daughters we are.**

We worship God revealed in Jesus Christ,
the eternal Word of God made flesh;
who lived our human life,
died for sinners on the cross;
who was raised from the dead,
and proclaimed by the apostles, Son of God;

All **who lives eternally,
as saviour and sovereign,
coming in judgement and mercy,
to bring us to eternal life.**

We worship God, ever present in the Holy Spirit;
who brings this Gospel to fruition,
assures us of forgiveness,

All **strengthens us to do God's will,
and makes us sisters and brothers of Jesus,
sons and daughters of God.**

We believe in the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church,
united in heaven and on earth:
on earth, the Body of Christ,

All **empowered by the Spirit to glorify God
and to serve humanity;
in heaven, eternally one
with the power, the wisdom and the love of God in Trinity.**

We believe that, in the fullness of time,
God will renew and gather in one
all things in heaven and on earth through Christ,
and be perfectly honoured and adored.

All **We rejoice in God who has given us being,
who shares our humanity to bring us to glory,
our source of prayer and power of praise;
to whom be glory, praise and adoration, now and evermore.**

The affirmations

Two forms of affirmation are included below, and two others may be found in the Basis of Union, Schedule A. These are the only forms authorised for use by the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church.

The Elder responsible for their pastoral care or another sponsor may present the candidate to the congregation with appropriate introduction.

Either:

... N ... , you have come in response to the call of Christ and the leading of the Holy Spirit to confess your faith in Christ. Do you believe and trust in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, maker of heaven and earth, giver of life, redeemer of the world?

I do.

Do you repent of your sins, turn away from evil, and turn to Christ?

By God's grace, I do.

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord?

I do.

or a form including the following elements:

- a Trinitarian confession of faith
- repentance of sin
- a confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord

An example:

Do you believe that God is the Creator of all things,
that Jesus perfectly embodies divine love,
and that the Holy Spirit moves in your heart?

I do.

Are you ready to reject all that is wrong in your life and in the world,
and turn to walk the way of Jesus Christ?

I am.

Do you accept Jesus as your Saviour and give your life to him?

I do.

Statement or testimony

A short statement or testimony, telling the story of their coming to faith, may be given by the person to be confirmed.

The promises

The words used upon affirmation of faith are included below, and two others may be found in the Basis of Union, Schedule A. These are the only forms authorised for use by the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church.

... N ... has made confession of *their* faith.
Now *they* are to make *their* promises
as *they* are received into the full privileges
and responsibilities of Church membership.

From the beginning, believers have continued in the worship and fellowship of the Church.

... N ... , do you commit yourself to this life?

I do, with God's help.

With the whole Church, will you proclaim by word and action the good news of God in Christ?

I will, with God's help.

Other promises may be added or inserted:

eg: Do you accept the gift and cost of following Christ in your daily life and work?

I do with God's help.

Another form of words may be used that includes a promise to share in the worship, fellowship and mission of the church.

An example:

Will you pray and worship, at home and with others?

I will

Will you offer your gifts and time to the life of the Church and so belong with us to Christ?

I will

Will you join in telling the good news and share in service to the community?

I will.

Will you pursue justice and peace, and care for God's creation, our common home?

I will

Promise by the congregation

As a community of faith, representing the whole Church,

do you welcome ... N ... and promise to share with *them* what you yourselves have received, the gift of God's love revealed in Christ?

All **We do, with God's help.**

The confirmation, or strengthening in faith

... N ... , may God open your eyes to see the glory around you, your ears to hear the breaking in of God's reign and your mouth to share good news. Come now to receive the laying on of hands with prayer to strengthen you for the work of God.

The candidate may kneel or stand for a moment of silent prayer. The Minister and at least one Elder place their hands on the head of the candidate(s) as the Minister prays:

God of all grace, confirm and strengthen N in the power of the Holy Spirit, that they may shine like light in the world, grow in strength and depth of faith, and come at last to the fullness of the maturity of Christ.

All **Amen.**

The Minister may anoint the newly confirmed member with oil as a symbol of the anointing of God's Holy Spirit.

All may say or sing Aaron's blessing (Numbers 6:24-26)

May God bless and protect you,
May God smile on you and be kind to you,
May God look on you with love and bring you peace.

or

God is the One who'll bless and keep you;
yours is the radiance from God's face.
God is the One who calls and meets you;
yours is the promise of God's grace.

God is the One whose favour holds you;
yours is the gift of love to claim.
God is the One whose peace enfolds you;
yours is the bearing of God's name.

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Suggested tune: Spiritus Vitae ('O Breath of life, come sweeping through us')

or

All **The LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make his face to shine upon you,
and be gracious to you;
the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.**

(See Rejoice and Sing 420 for a sung version of these words)

The newly confirmed member stands.

Welcome

... N ... , by baptism you were received into membership of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. You have now affirmed your baptism and confessed your faith in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord. You have accepted the privileges and responsibilities of membership of the Church. In the name of Jesus Christ, the only head of the Church, and in accordance with the decision of this local church meeting, we welcome you into membership of this congregation of the United Reformed Church. May your sharing in our life together bring blessing to you and to us all.

One of the following texts, or another appropriate to the newly-confirmed member, may be used.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

For once you were darkness, but now in Lord you are light. Live as children of light – for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, ‘Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.’

Ephesians 5:8, 14

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

The Minister and Elder(s) may offer a welcome.

A Bible, or other appropriate book, and a Confirmation certificate may be presented.

The congregation may say together:

All **In the name of Christ we welcome you.
May we grow together in unity,
and be built up into the body of Christ in love,
to the glory of God, the eternal and holy Trinity.
Amen.**

The service continues with the Lord's Supper. The new member(s) may bring forward the bread and wine.

After the dismissal and blessing the Minister (and Elders) may lead the new member(s) through the church and members of the congregation may be encouraged to greet them.